

Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks

National Monument



Bureau of Land Management
Albuquerque Field Office



Welcome to Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument to protect its geologic, scenic and cultural values. The Bureau enjoys a partnership with the Pueblo de Cochiti, the University of New Mexico, and Sandoval County which provides access, facility development and maintenance, resource protection, research opportunities, public education and enjoyment, and tranquility for the public.

The Pueblo de Cochiti has always considered this area a significant place. “Kasha-Katuwe” means “white cliffs” in the traditional Keresan language of the pueblo. Under the BLM’s administration, these lands were designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and contain a National Recreational Trail. On January 17, 2001, Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks was designated a national monument.

Of Time and the Rocks

Located on the Pajarito Plateau in north-central New Mexico, the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument is a remarkable outdoor laboratory, offering an opportunity to observe, study, and experience the geologic processes that shape natural landscapes. The elevation of the national monument ranges from 5,570 feet to 6,760 feet above sea level.

The cone-shaped tent rock formations are the products of volcanic eruptions that occurred 6 to 7 million years ago and left pumice, ash and tuff deposits over 1,000 feet thick. Tremendous explosions from the Jemez volcanic field spewed pyroclasts (rock fragments), while searing hot gases blasted down slopes in an incandescent avalanche called a “pyroclastic flow.” In close inspections of the arroyos, visitors will discover small, rounded, translucent obsidian (volcanic glass) fragments created by rapid cooling. Please leave these fragments for others to enjoy.



along the cliff face. Over time, wind and water cut into these deposits, creating canyons and arroyos, scooping holes in the rock, and contouring the ends of small, inward ravines into smooth semi-circles.

Historical and Cultural Perspective

The complex landscape and spectacular geologic scenery of the national monument has been a focal point for visitors for centuries. Before nearby Cochiti Reservoir was built, surveys recorded numerous archaeological sites reflecting human occupations spanning 4,000 years. During the 14th and 15th centuries, several large ancestral pueblos were established and their descendants, the Pueblo de Cochiti, still inhabit the surrounding area.



In 1540, the Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado noted Pueblo de Cochiti. Throughout the 17th century, settlers would follow Juan de Oñate’s route along the Rio Grande Valley, bringing trade, farming and domestic animals, and claiming land grants from the Spanish Crown. In 1680, the Cochiti people joined other pueblos in a rebellion that drove the Spaniards south to El Paso, Texas.

By 1870, iron rails stretched into the territory of New Mexico bringing loggers, miners and others to enjoy its rich natural resources.

Plants and Animals

In the midst of the formations, clinging to the cracks and crevices high on the cliff face, the vibrant green leaves and red bark of the manzanita shrub stand in sharp contrast to the muted colors of the rocks. A hardy evergreen, the manzanita produces a pinkish-white flower in the spring that adds to the plant’s luster. Other desert plants found in the area include Indian paintbrush, Apache plume, rabbitbrush, and desert marigold.



Manzanita - used for medicinal purposes by Native Americans.

Depending on the season, you are likely to see a variety of birds. Red-tailed hawks, American kestrels, violet-green swallows, Western bluebirds, and an occasional golden eagle soar above the area or use piñon-covered terrain near the cliffs.

The ponderosa pine and piñon-juniper woodlands provide habitat for big game and nongame animals. Elk, mule deer, and wild turkey frequent the higher elevations. Coyotes, chipmunks, rabbits, and ground squirrels are prevalent.

Getting There

The national monument includes 4,148 acres of public lands located 40 miles southwest of Santa Fe and 55 miles northeast of Albuquerque, with the most direct access from Interstate 25. From Albuquerque, take the exit for Santo Domingo/Cochiti Lake Recreation Area (Exit 259) off I-25 onto NM Route (SR) 22. Follow the signs on SR 22 to Cochiti Pueblo and Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument. Turn right off SR 22 at the pueblo water tower (painted like a

drum) onto Tribal Route 92, which connects to Forest Service Road 266. Travel 5 miles on a gravel road to the national monument’s designated parking/picnic area, fee station and trailhead.

From Santa Fe, take the Cochiti Pueblo Exit 264 off I-25 onto NM Route (SR)16. Turn right off SR 16 onto SR 22, and follow the signs to Cochiti Pueblo and the national monument.

A portion of the 5-mile access road to the national monument crosses Pueblo de Cochiti tribal land. Along with the pueblo, neighbors in the vicinity include the Santo Domingo Indians, the Jemez Indians, private landowners, the Santa Fe National Forest and State of New Mexico. Please respect these landowners and their property.

National Recreational Trail

The National Recreational Trail is for foot travel only, and contains two segments that provide opportunities for birdwatching, geologic observation and plant identification.



Hikers enjoy all seasons at the monument.

Both segments of the trail begin at the designated monument parking area. The Cave Loop Trail is 1.2 miles long, rated as easy. The more difficult Canyon Trail is a 1.5-mile, one-way trek into a narrow canyon with a steep (630-ft) climb to the mesa top for excellent views of the Sangre de Cristo, Jemez, Sandia mountains and the Rio Grande Valley. Both trails are maintained; however, during inclement weather the canyon may flash flood and lightning may strike the ridges.

Your Safety, Our Concern

Access

Access to the national monument may be closed by order of the Pueblo de Cochiti Tribal Governor.

Weather

During periods of inclement weather, the access road may wash out or become impassible. Contact the BLM or the Pueblo de Cochiti for current road conditions.

Visitation Hours

Winter (November 1 to March 31) - **8 am to 5 pm**
Summer (April 1 to October 31) - **7 am to 7 pm**

Day Use Only

Camping, fires, shooting, and climbing on the tent rocks are prohibited. Glass containers can be hazardous and are best left at home. View the national monument on foot; to reduce erosion, stay on the designated trail. Motorized vehicles and mountain bikes are permitted only on the access road and designated parking area. Observe the posted speed limit to reduce dust and noise at Pueblo de Cochiti.

Pueblo de Cochiti

Please respect the traditions and privacy of the Pueblo de Cochiti. Photography, drawings, and recordings are **not** permitted there.

User Fee Amounts (U.S. Currency and U.S. Bank Checks only)

The national monument is a fee area. All your fees are returned to the site for monitoring, maintenance, and improvements.

Private Vehicles - \$5.00 on-site fee

Private Vehicle with 10 or more passengers - \$10.00 on-site fee

Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument Annual Pass - \$15.00/year

Commercial and Adventure Tours - \$25.00 day-use permit

Nonprofit Organizations - \$25.00 day-use permit

Golden Age/Access Passports - \$2.50/vehicle on-site fee

Golden Eagle Passport - \$5.00/vehicle on-site fee

National Park Service Pass with or without hologram - \$5.00/vehicle on-site fee

Accredited Public/Private Schools/Colleges/Universities - No fee - Day-use permit required

Contact the Bureau of Land Management, Albuquerque Field Office to obtain day-use permits, Golden Passports and the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks Annual Pass. Suggested group size is a maximum of 25 persons to reduce impacts to the resources and other visitors.

Rules and Fines



Pets must be kept on a leash (in accordance with Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 8365.2-1). There is a \$50.00 fine for non-compliance.

Other fines range from \$50 to \$250 for violating federal regulations on fees, speeding, damage to the monument’s natural resources, and other infractions. For a complete listing, call BLM Law Enforcement at the Albuquerque Field Office.

Emergency Assistance - Call 911 for the Sandoval County Sheriff’s Office

Visitor Services

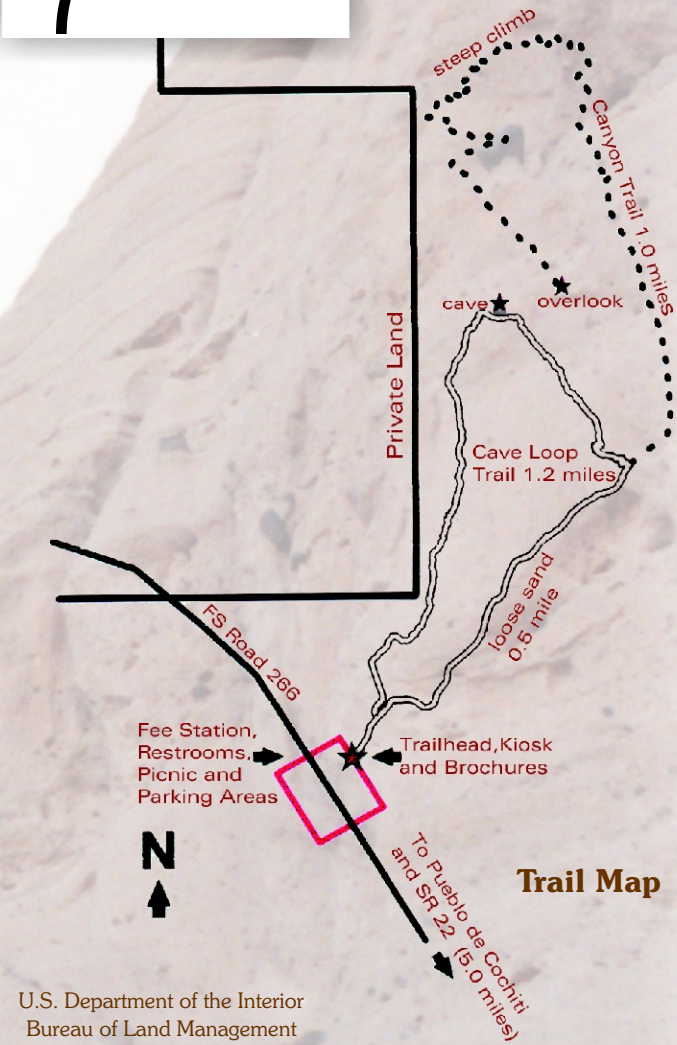
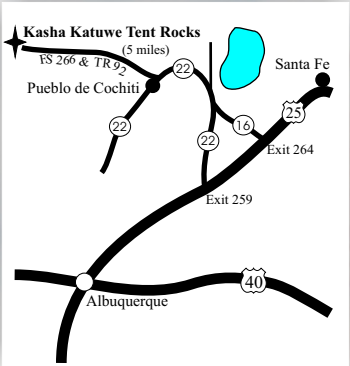
Lost and Found

Bureau of Land Management, Albuquerque Field Office - 505/761-8704 or 505/761-8700.

Convenience Store, Gas and Camping Facilities at Cochiti Lake

Snacks, water, soda, sandwiches and gas can be obtained at the convenience store located near the town of Cochiti Lake. Camping, boating facilities and RV hookups are available at the Cochiti Lake Recreation Area.

Location Map



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Albuquerque Field Office
435 Montano Rd. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87107
www.nm.blm.gov
505/761-8704 or 505/761-8700

